

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 17-20 are pending and stand rejected.

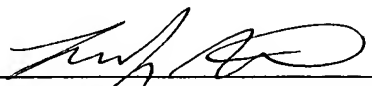
The Examiner continued to reject claims 1, 3-8, 10, 12, and 14-20 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2002/01833800 of Schmidt et al. (Schmidt). Claims 1, 2, 9, 11, 13-15, and 17-20 are also rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,340,588 of Nova et al. (Nova) in view of Schmidt.

As agreed with the Examiner in a telephone conversation on October 15, 2004, the Rule 131 Declaration of Alan J. Dextrateur, previously submitted, is sufficient to eliminate Schmidt as prior art thereby overcoming the pending rejections.

In view of the remarks above, Applicants submit that claims 1-15 and 17-20 are in condition for allowance. In the event that the above amendments and remarks are not deemed to place this case in condition for allowance, an opportunity to interview with the Examiner is requested. Applicants encourage the Examiner to telephone the undersigned upon receipt of this response to discuss any issues that may remain.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lisa J. Michaud, Reg. No. 44,238
Attorney for Applicant(s)

NUTTER, MCCLENNEN & FISH, LLP
World Trade Center West
155 Seaport Boulevard
Boston, MA 02210-2604
Tel: (617)439-2550
Fax: (617)310-9550